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LETTER DATED 19 OCTOBER 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to draw your attention once again to the problem of prisoners of war (POWs), the missing in action (MIAs) and the missing and detained civilians in Croatia in general, and in particular in the United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs) Sector East and the town of Vukovar.

You will recall, Excellency, that after the occupation of some parts of the Croatian territory by Serbian irregular and paramilitary forces aided by the former "Yugoslav People's Army", more than 10,000 Croatian citizens, both civilians and combatants, have remained unaccounted for. No information on their whereabouts has been made available by the local Serbian insurgent authorities or the Belgrade regime, nor was there any confirmation that the persons were eventually deceased. This state of insecurity brings constant agony to the surviving relatives and the next-of-kin. It is the belief of my Government that unrestricted access to all of the presumed mass graves on Croatian territory has to be ensured to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) or any other international humanitarian organization, that the excavation should commence as soon as technically possible (pursuant to your reports S/25274 and S/26545), and that the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) be given the mandate to actively secure the excavation sites and graveyards in the areas from where there was the highest number of missing persons (Vukovar, Erdut, Dalj, Pakrac).

We believe that the international community should exert pressure against the Belgrade regime in order to have them influence the local insurgent Serb authorities within Croatia to cooperate in the search efforts; to have the Belgrade authorities and local Serbs honour the obligation under the Budapest accord; and to release all the prisoners of war and detainees at present in Serbia and Montenegro.

Furthermore, as one of the first points on the agenda of any possible future peace conference, or any similar negotiating effort, my Government would like to see the establishment of an independent body that would conduct a search for all the persons unaccounted for.

I would ask for your kind assistance in distributing this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mario NOBILO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative